smoking of bidi is less harmful as compared to other forms of tobacco and have requested to consider reduction in the principal display are from 50% to 20%.

There is no evidence to indicate that consumption of any one form of tobacco is less harmful. Further, there are studies to show that tobacco consumption only increases the poverty and adversely affects the socio-economic conditions of tobacco consumer. There are also studies to indicate that various positive public health measures such as pictorial warnings do not have any immediate economic impact on the industry, due to the addictive nature of the tobacco product. On the other hand, such positive public health measures go a long way in improving the overall health & economy of the nation.

**Joint Monitoring Mission for Anti-TB Campaign**

2668. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have lately reviewed the progress made so far in the implementation of Anti-TB campaign, through a joint monitoring mission; and

(b) if so, how far the death rate attributable to TB has since come down, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir. Joint Monitoring reviewed the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) in October, 2006.

(b) Consequent upon implementation of Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) since 1997 covering the entire country by March, 2006, treatment success rate has tripled from 25% to 85% and death rate has been cut 7 fold from 29% to about 4% among patients registered under RNTCP. Till date, the RNTCP has placed more than 63 lakh patients on DOTS treatment, averting more than 11.33 lakh deaths. As per WHO latest estimates, death rate due to TB has declined from 45 per lakh population per year in 1990 to 30 per lakh currently.